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Peacebuilding Commission

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Provisional guidelines for the participation of civil society in meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission, submitted by the Chairperson on the basis of informal consultations*

In conformity with General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005) and as envisaged in the rules of procedure of the Peacebuilding Commission, the guidelines for the participation of civil society in meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission are set out below.

I. General principles

1. The Peacebuilding Commission recognizes the important contribution of civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to all stages of peacebuilding efforts, given that one of the main purposes of the Commission is to bring together all relevant actors, in particular national stakeholders.

2. The Commission reaffirms the important role of women and women's organizations in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all relevant peacebuilding efforts.

3. The Commission, in consultation with the Governments of the countries under consideration, shall encourage and ensure greater participation of civil society organizations and representatives from the countries under consideration.

4. Bearing in mind that circumstances are specific to each country under consideration and also that there is no single model for organizing meetings in country-specific configurations, this process should be transparent, flexible and inclusive of all relevant parties.

* The proposed guidelines would apply to meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission other than in the Organizational Committee configuration and are not intended to create a precedent for other organs of the United Nations.

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5. In recognition of the intergovernmental nature of the Commission, active participation of civil society organizations and representatives therein, while welcome, does not entail a negotiating role.

II. Modalities of attendance and participation

6. The attendance and participation of civil society organizations and representatives in the work of the Commission shall be regulated through different modalities, as set out below.

A. Formal meetings

7. The Chairperson of the Organizational Committee or the Coordinator for the respective country-specific configuration, in consultation with the members of the Organizational Committee, shall invite representatives of civil society organizations that are actively engaged in peacebuilding activities to make oral statements and provide information, as may be needed, that could contribute to the work of the Commission on specific matters within the scope of their activities pertaining to integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding.

8. Prior to extending invitations, the Chairperson or the Coordinator for the respective country-specific configuration shall circulate to the members of the Organizational Committee the names of civil society organizations and representatives whose participation is proposed, together with available background information on the basis of the elements contained in annex I.

9. The inclusion of civil society organizations and representatives in the list of participants shall be guided by the principles provided for in annex II. Should a member raise an objection to the participation of a given organization or representative, the Chairperson or the Coordinator for the respective country-specific configuration shall engage in consultations with the aim of reaching consensus on the final list no later than seven working days before the meeting, taking into account logistical circumstances. The list shall include self-selected civil society representatives from the country under consideration.

10. In this regard, the Commission shall encourage civil society organizations from the country under consideration to nominate representatives for inclusion in the list of participants through a local and independent self-selecting process, and shall encourage the participation of those representatives in the national delegation.

B. Informal meetings

11. The Chairperson shall encourage relevant actors to interact and provide input to technical-level informal discussions of specific sectoral areas or thematic topics that may be organized outside the formal country-specific configuration.

12. Prior to formal meetings of country-specific configurations, the Coordinator for the respective country-specific configuration, in consultation with the Chairperson and members of the Organizational Committee, shall convene public informal meetings with representatives of civil society organizations to exchange

views on peacebuilding issues relevant to the country under consideration. The Chairperson shall prepare a summary of discussion for submission to the respective country-specific configuration.

13. Following formal meetings of country-specific configurations, the Coordinator for the respective country-specific configuration, in consultation with the Chairperson and members of the Organizational Committee, may convene public informal briefings with representatives of civil society organizations engaged in peacebuilding activities in the country under consideration in order to further exchange views on areas in which those organizations could contribute to the implementation of, and follow-up to, recommendations adopted at the formal meetings of the respective country-specific configuration. The Coordinator for the respective country-specific configuration shall prepare a summary of discussion for submission to the respective country-specific configuration.

C. Submission of written documents

14. The Chairperson may receive written comments, observations or statements and, with the support of the Coordinator for the respective country-specific configuration and the Peacebuilding Support Office, shall make every effort to ensure that written submissions relevant to the work of the Commission are made available to the members of the respective country-specific configuration no later than one week prior to meetings on the subject under review.

III. Review

15. The present guidelines shall be subject to review and evaluation six months from the date of their adoption by the Organizational Committee with a view to exploring the possibility of their further development in the light of progress in the work and functions of the Commission.

Annex I

For the purpose of reaching consensus on the list of participants, the Chairperson, with the support of the Coordinator for the respective configuration and the Peacebuilding Support Office, shall also circulate to the members of the Organizational Committee available background information on the following:

(a) An overview of the organization, its purposes, constitution and/or mission statement, or similar documents;

(b) A summary of the current programmes and activities of the organization undertaken in areas relevant to the work of the Commission and the country or countries in which they have been carried out during the preceding year;

(c) The organization's sources of funding;

(d) Members of the governing body of the organization and their nationalities, including a brief biography of the organization's representative.

Annex II

The inclusion of civil society organizations and representatives on the list of participants shall be guided by the following principles:

(a) The organization shall have a democratic and transparent decision-making process, and shall operate in accordance with the laws regulating the activities of civil society in the country of origin and in the country under consideration, as appropriate;

(b) The organization and representative shall be active in areas that are of direct relevance to the work of the Commission and can provide specific expertise and experience in peacebuilding upon which the Commission may wish to draw in consultations;

(c) The aims and purposes of the organization shall be in conformity with the spirit, purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.